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RUSTIC RHYMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"WINTER STUDIES IN THE COUNTRY."

*by
S. G. Fisher*

"I am one
Who loves the green-wood bank and lowing herd,
The russet prize, the lowly peasant's life,
Seasoned with sweet content."

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DEDICATION.

To a friend very dear,
Though a critic severe,
Whose fastidious eye,
Was eager to spy,
Each fault of the bard
And blemish, that marred
The sense and design
Or grace of his line,
That it might have merit
And appear with credit,
When it showed it's face
In a public place ;
Who was shy to praise,
Those parts of his lays,
Which he deemed the best,
But would still suggest,
'Twas safer for him,
When he tried to rhyme

And thought he could do it,
To recall some poet
Like Pope or like Byron,
And still keep his eye on
A model above him,
Whose art might improve him ;
Nor must he be stuffed
With conceit or puffed
With the vain idea,
That the world would see a
Beauty in such rhymes
As his in these times.
That if he should try them
In print, none would buy them,
When every bookseller
Copies of Longfellow,
Bryant, and Tennyson,
And Waldo Emerson,
Displayed in his store,
With a number more
Of illustrious name,
The favorites of fame.

For him to aspire
To rank among those,
In verse or in prose,
Was like the desire
Of a moth for a star.
'Twould be wiser by far

To look after his land
And direct plough and cart,
Than to try his rude hand
In attempts at high art.
To this critic sincere,
So exacting yet dear,
The verses here printed,
Are humbly presented,
With misgiving and fear.



RUSTIC RHYMES.

THE LAWN.

“My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood.”

WORDSWORTH.

THE day is hot, and near its noon,
Although, as yet, 'tis only June ;
My morning's work—light task—is done,
And now, beneath these trees, I shun
The fierceness of the blazing sun.

I sit within the ample shade,
By an embowering maple made,

One of a tall and thrifty band,
That round the house protecting stand;
Planted they were by my own hand,
And through many a pleasant year
I've watched them with parental care.
Willow and linden, sycamore,
And dark horse-chestnut arching o'er,
And trembling silver poplars greet
Each other, as their branches meet.
The beech, with foliage bright and gay,
And smooth clear trunk of mottled gray,
Stretches its leafy arms to embrace
The sugar maple's form of grace.
Acacia blossoms scent the air,
The feathery English ash is here,
Tall planes with scaly, speckled bark,
And pines, with foliage green and dark,

Whilst up among them, frequent strikes,
The Norway fir its emerald spikes.

Around they stand, and overhead,
Their mingled leaves and branches spread
A rustling, many-tinted roof,
Against the noonday sunbeams proof,
Throwing, as fitful breezes pass,
Wavering shadows on the grass.
A canopy of quivering light
And shifting color, dark and bright,
Alive with graceful motion, swaying,
Responsive to the light winds playing
Among the boughs, whose murmurs tell
They love the gentle dalliance well.
With their low tones in union meet,
Mingle the voices, clear and sweet,

Of joyous birds, who sit and sing,
Till all the trees with music ring.

What artist's mind hath ever planned,
What skilful workman's cunning hand,
Hath ever built, for princely power,
A hall in palace or in tower,
So well-adorned, retired and cool,
So stately and so beautiful.

Within this shadowy saloon
I spend the sultry hours of noon,
Enjoying summer shade and air,
Lounging at ease in rustic chair.
I gaze upon the landscape wide,
That stretches far on either side
Of ancient wood and fertile plain,
Waving with crops of grass and grain,

And decked throughout the varied scene,
In nature's summer dress of green;
Of winding river, sparkling bright,
And flashing in the noonday light;
And watch the fleecy clouds that lie
Like drifts of snow piled in the sky,
Blending their gray and silver hue
With its expanse of stainless blue:
Fantastic forms, that change before
The eye their outline can explore,
Yet in all the myriad changes,
Through which their filmy substance ranges,
Still beautiful, as moonlight gleams,
Or woman's smiles, or poet's dreams.

Oft from the soft and radiant grace,
That glows around on nature's face,

I turn to that which likewise shines
In some old bard's enduring lines,
Or which illumines the serious page
Of saint or philosophic sage.
Idealizing Hamlet's thought,
Ophelia's love to madness wrought,
Weak, tempted Macbeth's moral fall,
Subtle Iago's heart of gall,
Lear's sacred rage and bitter wrong,
Gentle Cordelia, true and strong,
Portia's soft heart and lofty mind,
Tender, fantastic Rosalind,
Glowing Juliet's youthful fire,
Miranda's innocent desire,
Tricksy Ariel, Caliban,
Human fairy, monster man,
Witches and dancing elves and sprites,
Peopling the groves in starry nights,

Great Kings and Queens, renowned of old,
Ambitious priests and warriors bold,
Courtiers and clowns and villains dark,
In Shakspeare's page they live and work.
Still in his verse resistless flow,
Terror and beauty, love and woe,
And the creations of his mind
Though ne'er with human shape combined,
Such is the wondrous power of art,
Of mankind seem to form a part;
To be, than history less ideal,
Than what we see and know, more real.

They rise before me as I look
O'er the weird pages of his book.
Its words of power were written, when
I was not numbered among men,

And as each generation passed,
Their magic spell did o'er it cast ;
They yet will speak to countless minds
When I am scattered to the winds.
As the old mountains, and the sea
And stars which shine eternally,
Unchanged themselves, inspire and sway
Races that flourish and decay,
Seeking affinity with mind,
In whate'er fleeting forms enshrined,
And gaining ever homage due
From mind forever clothed anew,
And doomed to flow as it began,
A restless, turbid stream of man.

Oft, too, beneath the spreading trees,
In dreamy, mystic reveries,

My musing, wond'ring thoughts aspire
To spheres beyond the minstrel's lyre,
His moving scenes and words of fire;
Beyond the passion and the strife,
And interests of our fleeting life.
I seek to find some guiding clue
To lead me to the real, the true;
To that which was e'er time begun,
Which will be when its course is run,
Which rules and moves this wondrous all
In which I live, an atom small,
Yet with a comprehensive soul
That sees and pants to know the whole,
To raise the curtain from the shrine
And gaze on truth and power divine.
Bewildered in this wondrous realm
Of thoughts that dazzle and o'erwhelm,

Yet which, once seen and felt, control
With wizard charm the captive soul,
And fill it with the eager hope
To know its being's end and scope,
To reach, beyond the chains of sense,
Regions of pure intelligence,
Where truth and beauty we may find
Simple perceptions of the mind,
And from the finite's bar behold,
For us, the infinite unrolled;
In such wild mazes wandering, tost
From doubt to doubt, all pathway lost,
I turn to Thee, O mighty spirit!
That these late ages do inherit,
Best relic of the glorious prime
Of Greece, amid the wrecks of time
Still towering, simple, and sublime.

Great Plato, from whose fountain mind
To elevate and teach mankind,
Full streams of thought, sweet, subtle, strong,
Have flowed through ages dark and long,
Stormful and wild, yet kept their way
Undimmed, to bless a better day;
Secure, though hid from common view,
In love and reverence of the few
Choice spirits, that their value knew;
Have kept their way, for me to greet
Their wisdom in my lone retreat.
As 'neath the surges of the sea,
The electric words flash silently
Along the slender cable laid
Upon the pathway nature made,

And carry thought from shore to shore,
Safely, though tempests o'er it roar.*

In converse with such friends as these,
I sit beneath the rustling trees,
Amid the leafy pomp of June,
And the charmed hours fly too soon.
Often, from the thought-laden book,
Upon the lovely scene I look;
Often from river, wood, and plain,
I turn me to the book again.
In each the lineaments I find,
Express the one pervading mind,
From whose interior, central force,
All things take their law and course;

* These lines were written the day after the Queen's message was received by the Atlantic Telegraph. The author allows them to remain, in the hope that the enterprise may yet prove successful.

Clouds rise, and rivers sparkling run,
Flowers bud and blossom in the sun,
Trees lift their branches, grass and grain
With harvests cover hill and plain.
From the same teeming, mother earth,
Like them, the crop of man comes forth,
Like them he grows, and when his days
Have closed, like them in earth decays;
And Shakspeare's verse, and Plato's thought
By the same power divinely wrought,
Shine and flow like the bounteous river,
Like it will shine and flow forever;
Like it, and like the opening buds,
The springing grass and solemn woods,
And man's and woman's form and face,
Charm by their majesty or grace,
Charm and delight, but naught reveal.
On them is also set the seal

Of nature's mystery, which no token
From man or heaven yet hath broken,
Or voice, from out the silence, spoken
The word which shall explain our birth,
And solve the riddle of the earth.

I ponder o'er the page, where shines
The poet's thought in glowing lines ;
With eager interest I pursue
The philosophic thinker's clue ;
With rapture ever new, I trace
The loveliness of nature's face ;
I look within—and lo ! the whole
Is a reflection of the soul,
A portion of myself, unknown
Until a light upon it thrown
From nature, and from books, revealed
A part of me, till then concealed.

I follow Plato's subtle thought,
'Tis also mine, when he hath taught.
In Shakspeare's wide creative art
Myself I see, and my own heart.
Even he could not transcend the plan
Of nature, when she modelled man,
And whate'er man is, finds in me
A chord of human sympathy.
I look abroad, and I behold
In men, myself in other mould ;
A common soul looks from their eyes,
And answers me in their replies.
The beauty of the skies and earth
In me, and not in them has birth ;
Not in the water of the river,
Nor in the beams that on it quiver,
In waving grain, or summer grass,
Nor in the 'ores's stately mass,

Nor in the clustering leaves and flowers
That deck and perfume garden bowers,
Exists the witching charm I see,
And love, but in my mind, in me.
They are mere matter, ever moving,
And in new forms and colors roving;
But beauty is a sentiment
Which they excite, not with them blent,
Nor part of them, but of the soul,
Whose thoughts and feelings they control.
They are our prison and our home,
O'erarch our being, like the dome
Of the deep-vaulted sky, our thought,
Our knowledge out of them is wrought,
And beyond their rounding sphere,
No eye can pierce, no ear can hear.
Yet what they are we cannot tell,
Or whether they without us dwell,

And are the real things they seem,
Or phantoms of life's troubled dream.
With all of these my kindred mind
In mystic union is combined,
And Plato's wisdom, Shakspeare's art,
And nature's beauty, form a part
Of the great soul that seems to be
The same that thinks and feels in me,
And charms and teaches me in them;
All flowers growing on one stem,
Which cannot live apart, alone,
But each is all, and all is one,
And that one, Truth; revealed in beauty,
Revealed in moral law and duty;
The deep, pure fountain, whence arise
All lovely forms that please our eyes,
All thoughts and feelings that inspire
High aims and virtuous desire,

Whose lustre shines in deeds and trees,
Whose law rules men, and ants, and bees,
Whose voice speaks in the poet's song,
And in the wind that sighs among
The summer leaves, whose winning grace
In birds and words, and waves we trace,
In childhood's play, in twilight skies,
The wild deer's step and woman's eyes.
Truth is the seal, beauty the print,
Goodness the coin, that from this mint
Of boundless nature, issues forth
To gladden and enrich the earth.
Truth, beauty, goodness, three in one
Are bound, and all beneath the sun
Their impress bears; beauty is true,
Truth beautiful, and virtue, too,
And all are good. The universe
This mystic lesson doth rehearse;

That truth is spirit, ruling all ;
Man spirit, in the body's thrall ;
Matter is spirit manifested
To sense, with varied shape invested,
Yet how much of this outside show
Is it or us, we cannot know.
Something it is which still excites
Our mind, which charms us and delights
And limits us within its bound,
So that we cannot see beyond ;
Which, through all form of change and season,
Still lives and moves by law and reason,
Fixed law, pure reason, whose decrees
Are the eternal harmonies,
Proclaiming through creation broad,
That men and things are thoughts of God.

Thus, upon my shadowy lawn,
From the world's noisy crowds withdrawn,
I muse and dream the hours away,
Through the long, tranquil summer day.
On no pursuit or purpose bent,
I yet deem not the hours misspent ;
And this communion I prefer
With poet and philosopher,
To action and the selfish strife
For what most deem the good of life.
Conquests of knowledge made, I hold
A richer treasure than much gold ;
And truth perceived, a richer gem
Than shines in fortune's diadem.
A simple country home and leisure,
These open life to every pleasure,
That art and genius can afford,
Or nature, at her sumptuous board.

In this rude scene, each common sight
Fills me with wonder and delight,
And beauty casts its magic spell
From every object where I dwell.
Within my thoughtful, brooding mind,
Another wondrous world I find,
Like to the first, and with it mated,
To all its varying moods related,
Whilst from my books, the hoarded lore
Of ages, all their riches pour ;
The minstrel's song and vision clear,
The golden thought of ancient seer,
The flash of wit, the fateful story,
Of all the past, its deeds and glory.
These raise my spirit with their flight,
To regions of a loftier height,
Of purer atmosphere and light

Than the dull world of daily toil,
Of vulgar struggle and turmoil,
Of selfish passion, sensual pleasure,
Of power gained, or place, or treasure,
Whose bounds inclose, in narrow pen,
The restless, thronging herd of men.
There, those who choose, may live and work,
Within my humble sphere doth lurk
Enjoyments they could never spy,
Or would disdainfully pass by.
Sweet contentments, flowering o'er
My path sequestered and obscure,
Which seek the shade, and shun the day,
And bloom not in the worn highway.
Enough there are who love the chase,
The hot excitement of the race
For worldly gain, enough to do
The task-work of the world, the few

Thinkers and dreamers, from the list
Of active doers are not missed.
Without them parties rise and fall,
And in the legislative hall,
The chosen leaders of the State
Harangue in long and loud debate,
Whilst for each public trust, the number
Of eager aspirants encumber
The doors of ministers, whose duty
'Tis to divide the party's booty.
Without them, in the court-house, suitors
May find full ranks of keen disputers,
Learned in law lore from Coke to Chitty,
Trained to be eloquent or witty,
As the case needs, and prompt to fight
Faithfully for or 'gainst the right;
(With them the phrase is somewhat pliant
And faith means faithful to a client ;)

An able and accomplished bar,
Dalgetties of forensic war.
And banks and traders still will flourish,
The fruitful earth its harvests nourish,
The mill-wheels turn, and steamers glide,
Against opposing wind and tide,
And crowds fly fast o'er hill and plain,
Upon the rushing railway train,
And marble shops, their wealth display,
In tempting, glittering array,
And in the wide and stately street
Daily will busy thousands meet,
Though dreamers in their leafy nooks
Should waste their time with trees and books,
And for their visionary dreams
Forsake the world's full, restless streams;
Refuse the contest and the toil,
Refuse alike the alluring spoil,

Preferring rather to be poor,
Unknown, unhonored, and obscure.
Be mine this lowly lot, apart
From crowded street and busy mart,
From law and politics, and trade,
Lounging to muse beneath the shade,
By the clustering branches made.
Content with what the harvest yields
From my few paternal fields ;
Though it be simple, frugal fare,
I have it without toil or care.
Work I leave to ants and bees,
Brokers, attorneys, oxen, these
May toil for fees, and food, and honey,
Hive wax, or scrip, or rents, or money ;
Another path my temper suits,
And labor yielding other fruits,

Nor hath ambition, for my eyes,
In all her shining store, a prize
To tempt me from my maple tree,
My solitude and liberty.

THE SNOW-STORM.

“More servants wait on man
Than he ’ll take notice of.”

GEORGE HERBERT.

My modest library is warm
And well protected from the storm.
Heaped up, the friendly anthracite,
In polished grate, burns hot and bright.
Around, my steadfast friends, my books,
From floor to ceiling fill their nooks.
Wit and wisdom of past ages,
Thoughts of poets and of sages,

Cover the walls, and ready stand,
Obedient at my command,
To cheer, and elevate, and pour,
For me their rich and varied lore.
With such good company, the day
Speeds quickly, joyfully away.
In silent and serene delight
I read, and meditate, and write ;
Sitting at ease in elbow-chair,
Alone, content and free from care,
Beyond the crowded city's din,
Whilst peace and comfort reign within.

Without the snow is falling fast
And drifts before the wintry blast.
The lawn is white, and every tree
Is decked with fairy drapery ;

Each gnarled limb, each slender bough
Is coated by the pure white snow.
On pines and firs it lies in flakes
Of white on green, and the wind shakes
It down in powder, like the spray
Blown from green billows of the sea.
The porch with snow is covered o'er,
Snow is piled up around the door,
It lies in masses on the roof,
Ridges of snow are all the proof
Where fences are, and from the sight,
Pathways and roads have vanished quite.

How beautiful the dazzling show
Made by the delicate, pure white snow.
How softly, silently its flakes
Fall through the air ; how soon it makes

Another landscape by its touch,
Lovely as was the first, and such
Nature's fine concord, that the blue
Of heaven, the gray and purple hue
Of distant woods, the trunks of trees,
The clouds that sail before the breeze,
Or skies when darkened, dusk and dun
Or crimson of the setting sun,
Their forms and colors, shade and light,
Suit well this robe of dazzling white,
Give varied beauty to the snow,
And take from it a richer glow ;
And thus impart to winter charms
Lovely as those which summer warms.

The snow, the cold and dreary snow,
Across its wastes the wild winds blow ;

Wide and far it spreads around,
Deeply it covers all the ground
So lately dry; where'er you go,
Nothing but snow, the cold, wet snow.
A man hath need to fence it out,
With roof and wall, secure and stout,
And doors and windows, strong and tight;
For, though it looks so pure and bright,
If it may enter at its will,
Its touch the stoutest heart can chill.
And should he venture forth to roam,
Before he leaves his genial home,
Let him his armor well prepare,
Th' encounter with this foe to dare;
In thick boots must his feet be bound,
A thick, warm coat must wrap him round,
Or else these flakes that softly fall,
This lovely snow, that throws o'er all

Its spotless robe, will to his heart
Ruthlessly strike an icy dart;
Benumb his nerves, palsy his strength,
Relax his sinews, and, at length,
Stretch him in death upon the ground,
And o'er him build a cold, white mound.

The snow, the pitiless, cold snow,
The rude, remorseless winds that blow;
The frost that changes in a trice
The crystal streams to crystal ice;
By whose fell power the friendly face
Of the earth frowns on man's frail race,
Drives him away from wood and field,
Which neither food nor shelter yield,
Forcing him to a desperate strife,
With nature, even for his life;—

Though stern and terrible, are yet
Benign instructors, o'er us set
Our ingenuity to whet.
Rigorous taskmasters, but kind,
They train the body and the mind
In hardy labors ; first to gain
Mere sustenance, with toil and pain ;
This done, at once new prospects rise,
Prompting to nobler enterprise
And bolder effort, kindling thought
To seek for knowledge, and thus taught
Nature's fine secrets, all her laws
Become man's servants, in his cause
Working and lending him the strength
Of myriad arms, until at length
She leads him from the rude and plain,
Small portion of her wide domain,

To comfort, elegance, and arts :
Thence cities and the busy marts
Of commerce, thence the lofty dome,
And thence the happiness of home ;
Where, by the fireside's cheerful glow,
And safe from storms that round it blow,
Domestic love blooms fresh and sweet,
And genial friends in converse meet ;
Or learned leisure turns the page
Illumed by poet or by sage ;
Or, as I now, beguiles the time,
With musing thought or tuneful rhyme.

The snow, the warm, protecting snow,
It thickly covers all below
With such a mantle, as the wind
Can neither pierce nor yet unbind :

No power but of the kindly sun
Can undo what the snow hath done.
Beneath this robe, the tender germ
Lives through the dreary winter term ;
The rootlets of the growing wheat,
Wait for the spring's reviving heat ;
The withered grass its sap retains,
Dreaming the while of summer rains ;
Guarded securely by the snow,
Whilst the cold north winds o'er them blow
And sing, as fierce they rush along,
Their wild, majestic winter song.
Down the lone forest aisles they roar
And, like a thousand organs, pour
The mighty music ; sound in floods
Thunders through the trembling woods,
And echoing over hills and plains,
Proclaims to all that winter reigns.

Friendly they are, these winds, though frosty,
Keen and cold, but kind and lusty;
They penetrate each darksome glen,
Thick woodland covert, reedy fen,
And sweep o'er meadows low and dank,
Expelling vapors foul and rank,
And sweeten, in their boisterous play,
The offal of the year's decay.
Soon this, in the eternal round
Of change, to which all things are bound,
Will reappear in lovely forms,
When spring again the old earth warms;
When sleeping sap begins to run,
Summoned to motion by the sun,
And the snow, at his command,
Shall vanish from the awakened land.
He knows, from what disgusts the sight,
To bring forth beauty and delight,

Can ordure change to sweet perfumes,
And coarsest muck to brilliant blooms;
Make colors out of common mould,
That rival emerald and gold ;
Call buds and leaves from naked bowers,
And from the bare fields, grass, and flowers ;
Can robe anew the stately woods,
And give back to their solitudes,
The mystery of gloom and shade,
By the rustling foliage made,
And bid a thousand birds to sing,
Their joyous welcome to the spring.

The snow, the cold and kindly snow,
The keen, rough winds that o'er it blow,
They bring with them both joy and woe :
Want and suffering to the poor,
But pleasure to the rich man's door ;

Health to the vigorous and bold,
But terror to the weak and old ;
New energy to frame and mind,
But with it painful tasks enjoined ;
To nature benefits and harms,
Protecting blasts and cold that warms.
Thus, in them, is mingled still,
Those tangled threads of good and ill,
Harmonious discord, peaceful strife,
That weave the web that we call life.
A tissue made of smiles and tears,
Of dread that saddens, hope that cheers ;
Of pictured images that pass
Like faces, from a looking-glass ;
Of transient joys that fly too soon,
Like dew-drops withering ere noon ;
Of transient grief, that, ere it goes,
Over the heart a shadow throws,

A dull, cold, heavy shade, that lowers
On all that 's bright in coming hours ;
Of eager wishes, fond desires,
Youth's ardent longings, passion's fires,
Oft crowned with bliss, but oft delayed,
And oft deluded and betrayed ;
Of visions fair and dreams ideal,
Still contradicted by the real ;
Of high aims missed and good deeds done,
Without just meed of honor won ;
Of sweet affections sadly crossed,
And loves and friendships changed and lost ;
Of sudden griefs and crushing woe
That blots the future at a blow ;
But still of happy radiant homes,
Where not a cloud of sorrow comes
Through many a long and smiling year
Of tranquil joy, to cause a tear.

In this wild dream of life, how strange
The phantom shows that pass and change,
Of cruel wars and savage deeds,
And courage firm, that nobly bleeds ;
Of brutal baseness, vice and crime,
And virtue, steadfast and sublime ;
Of ignorance and folly crowned,
But worth and intellect disowned ;
Of modest merit cast aside
For bloated arrogance and pride ;
Yet oft of genius, from the sneers
Of vulgar envy and its jeers,
Soaring on sounding plumes afar,
Upward to fame's refulgent star ;
Of mounting thoughts that would aspire
Above the world to something higher,
To regions of eternal light,
To union with the infinite ;

That tired of all this cheating show,
Of dreamy phantoms, seek to know,
And bursting through the bonds of sense,
Ascend to pure intelligence,
And there by matter uncontrolled
The beautiful and true behold.
But still the mystery remains,
And the world's riddle, naught explains.
Beneath this show, a secret lies
Too deep and dark for mortal eyes.
Whoever seeks to find it out,
Is tangled in a maze of doubt ;
Whoso would its depths explore,
Soon baffled, the pursuit gives o'er,
Or finds the tree of knowledge still,
Bears a fruit with power to kill,

Though next the tree of life it stands,
In the fair garden he commands
And tills, by labor of his hands ;
Or, like Prometheus on his rock,
Despairs, whilst vultures round him flock
And grinning fiends his torments mock.
What is life, he asks, what man,
And what this vast creation's plan ?
Melting away like flakes of snow,
Whence came we, whither do we go ?
What is the substance of our minds,
Viewless as are the unseen winds,
Yet strong like them and stormful too ?
What is the false and what the true ?
What is our being's end and scope,
And what our duty here and hope ?
Is this wide world the human soul,
Or it, the mirror of the whole ?

Are we body or are we mind,
Or are we formed of both combined?
Links in an endless chain of cause
And ruled by never-changing laws,
Or are we causes, with free will
To choose the paths of good or ill?
Sole monarchs of our restless life,
Actors, not victims in its strife;
Holding in trust its fleeting hours,
Responsible for all its powers;
Yet doubting which course to prefer,
Bound to be right, yet prone to err,
Infirm of purpose, apt to stray
If pleasure lure us from the way.
Afraid to die, yet doomed to death,
We cling to this life's latest breath,
Although that breath be but a groan,
Rather than meet the dread unknown;

Content in ignorance to dwell,
'Mid objects loved so long and well ;
Content in restless dreams to lie,
Rather than risk eternity ;
Preferring here the darkest gloom
To light that shines beyond the tomb.

A good house and a fire bestow
Protection from the cold, wet snow ;
Allow one thus to court the muses
And moralize upon its uses,
Defy the raging of the storm,
Rude winds and driving snow disarm
Of all their terrors, and permit
The flow of thought, the play of wit :
Without them, what a fearful sound
These winds would make, thus raging round,

And what a dreary, dismal sight,
These fields, so beautiful and white.
Most feeble in creation's plan
Is unaccommodated man.
No house, no clothing, and no fire,
The wild beasts of the wood require,
But self-sufficing they may roam
And find, where'er they go, a home.
For food, they neither plough nor plant,
For dress, no woven garment want,
And forest caves and thickets spread
With leaves, give shelter and a bed.
But man must think, ere he can eat,
Must think, ere from the cold or heat,
With clothes and roof he can defend
His naked body, and must blend,
With stone and wood and earth, his thought
And strength, till out of them be wrought

External aids, that may supply
Protection, nature doth deny.
And thence his power, for spirit rules
Matter, and from it fashions tools
And weapons, and its force can bind
And guide, subjecting it to mind,
It and all lower mind and life.
The highest conquers in the strife,
And governs all in earth and heaven ;
For through creation's scale is given,
The sovereignty to those who think,
O'er those who only eat and drink :
Therefore I sit secure from harm
Nor dread the raging of the storm.
Fenced round by human art and skill,
I hear it rage, but fear no ill ;
Fenced, too, by laws from human foe,
More terrible than storm or snow,

Or savage wild beast of the wood ;
From violence and crime, the brood
Of vice and passion. These would change,
If left at their fierce will to range,
Life to a selfish struggle ; peace,
Order, security would cease,
And with them industry and art,
Comfort, and wealth, and taste depart.
Love of things good and beautiful
Would wither, 'neath the iron rule
Of coarse necessity, and life,
With nature and with man at strife,
Would soon become a barren sea
Of hatred, fear, and anarchy.

Thus my sheltering house is brought
From matter, by the force of thought.

By the same subtle power, the law,
With strength to conquer and o'erawe
Bold rapine, too, grew slowly;—it
Is the creation of man's wit,
Striving to introduce on earth
Justice and truth, of heavenly birth.
Man's art is then a conquest gained
O'er nature, by ideas obtained;
So government and just control
Are moral feelings of the soul,
Written in laws, endowed with will
The right to crown and fetter ill.
Both laws and arts are thoughts of mind,
And all their force must be combined,
Ere I, before this blazing fire,
Sheltered and clothed in warm attire,
Heedless of storms that round me blow,
Can write these rhymes about the snow.

THE FARMER.

“Lord, who would live turmoiled in the court,
 That may enjoy such quiet walks as these?
 This small inheritance, my father left me,
 Contenteth me, and is worth a monarchy.”

HENRY VI. *Part II.*

IN an old farm-house, by his chimney side,
 A farmer sat in his stout arm-chair.
 It was night, and the hearth was deep and wide,
 And a bright wood-fire was blazing there.
 He was not rich, but was free from care;
 Out in the field he had been since morn,
 Among the huskers of the corn,

Among the rustling fodder shocks,
And the golden heaps that dotted the plain,
Counting, well pleased, the loads of yellow grain
Hauled to his barn by the straining ox.

He had been at eve to his barnyard wide,
And looked through every stall and shed,
That horses and cattle were well supplied
With hay and straw, for fodder and bed.
He loved to see them sheltered and fed,
To hear them champing their oats and corn,
And toss the hay with impatient horn.

Well he knew them every one,
For he had bred them, and watched o'er them long;
They were fat and sleek, they were fast and strong,
And of good descent, from sire to son.

So he sat at night by his fireside bright,
And smoked at his ease a good cigar ;
There was nothing without his joy to blight,
And nothing within his peace to mar.
Both danger and trouble seemed afar ;
And he said, as the fragrant smoke up-curled,
Sure a farmer's life is the best in the world ;
Tranquil and safe, independent and free,
Neither wearied by toil nor worried by care,
He passes his days, in the wholesome air,
With the corn, and the grass, and the waving tree.

He loves the land
Tilled by his hand,
And every part
Speaks to his heart,
Of days well spent
In calm content ;

Of good work done,
And triumphs won,
O'er nature rude,
In field and wood ;
Of many a spot,
Where once he got
No grass or corn,
Which since hath borne
Abundant crops,
To crown his hopes ;
Of orchards now,
With every bough
Fruit-laden, where
'Twas waste and bare ;
And memories
 Of pleasant hours,
Adorn the trees
 Like clustering flowers.

He loves his home,
Nor seeks to roam
For joy beyond
Its ample bound.
There first his sight
Beheld the light ;
There childhood's plays
Sped happy days,
And slowly time
Brought manhood's prime,
Its plans and scope,
Labors and hope,
Its loves and fears,
Perchance its tears.
There, too, before
Him, dwelt of yore
His name and race ;

And to his eye,
This gives the place
A charm and grace,
Gold cannot buy,
Nor art supply.
He loves it, too,
Though it be new,
Nor hath the lustre
That time confers,
And ancestors,
And names which cluster
About old trees
And ancient walls,
Whose look recalls
Their memories ;
For 'twas his mind
Its plan designed ;

His taste and skill

Adorned it, till

At length it stands,

Work of his hands

And of his will.

He loves the work

That he hath done

Under the sun ;

For him doth lurk

In every grove

Upon his lawn,

Images drawn

From youth and love,

When their soft rays

Colored his days.

It is his lot,

This pleasant spot,

Which he hath planted
And decked with care,
It is a share,
Unto him granted,
Of the fair earth ;
Whether by birth
He got it, or
'Twas bargained for,
It is his own,
'Tis his alone ;
On it he stands,
Lord of his lands,
And of their fruit ;
And man and brute,
Without dispute,
His voice commands.

Within the ring
Of fence that bounds
His farm and grounds,
He is sole king.

No other sway
Doth he obey
But nature's laws,
By which he draws,
With honest toil,
From the kind soil,
A full supply,
Not poor or scant,
To satisfy
His frugal want.
Work of his hand,
And his good land,

Furnish his board,
And house well stored
With comfort; not
Dollars ill got,
With risk and fear
Of dangers near,
Financial shocks,
And fall of stocks.
Nor doth depend,
What he may spend,
On hireling pay,
Or what men say,
On client, or
On customer;
Discounted notes,
In bank or street,
Or counted votes,
When freemen meet,

From eager bands,
To choose whose hands,
Shall next disburse
The public purse.

He lives apart
From crowded mart,
'Mid Nature's charms,
Free from alarms
Of knavish arts
And worldly hearts ;
From the usurer's paw,
From attorneys-at-law,
From the demagogue's guile
And his politic smile ;
From grog-shops and hells,
The clang of fire-bells,
And the mob's savage yells ;

From the dust and din,
And the shameless sin,
The unpitied want,
Despairing and gaunt,
And the vain display
Of wealth's proud array,
That mingle and meet
In the dirty street.
Secluded and far
From tumult and jar,
'Mid the peace that broods
Over hills and woods,
As the seasons bring,
On their punctual wing,
The varying cheer
And toil of the year,
His interest ranges,
Through all their changes ;

And his worldly pride,
With fields well tilled
And barns well filled,
Is satisfied.
His sequestered path
Sweet enjoyment hath,
And delights unknown
'Mid the walls of town;
Pleasures which grow in fields,
Which the wild woodland yields,
Which flocks and herds supply,
And all that meets his eye,
Where beauty ever glows,
And its enchantment throws.
Joy in a quiet home,
Where no intruders come,
Which stretches its domain
Around, o'er hill and plain;

His own, where he may roam
Abroad, yet be at home ;
His own, where every part
Proclaims his skill and art,
And offers to his view,
Attractions ever new ;
Remembrance that endears,
Fruit that the present cheers,
Promise for future years.

He sees afar
The world's wild strife ;
Its restless war
Stirs not his life,
Nor his repose ;
As the distant roar
Of an ocean storm
Is heard by those
Who live on shore,

Secure from harm,

Without alarm.

In his retreat,

Under his trees,

From summer heat,

He seeks the breeze ;

Or roams the wood,

In musing mood.

His thoughtful mind,

Perpetual food

In books can find,

Which have the power

To lift the bar

That closes round,

In narrow bound,

The present hour,

And open far

The prospect vast
Of the rich past ;
Of varied being,
Beyond all seeing
Or sensual touch ;
Only to such
As thus are taught,
And live in thought,
These realms are shown,
This glory known.

Or by the fire,
Cheerful and bright,
On a winter night,
'Tis his delight

A rustic lyre
To tune, and bring
From its rude string,

Strains to express
His happiness.

His Devons red,
And Southdown sheep,
Tended and fed,
Repay their keep ;
Whilst the harvest yields,
From his guanoed fields,
Enough for a mind
And a taste refined ;
Enough for leisure,
For sober pleasure,
A sirloin on the board,
And cellar choicely stored,

For hospitable cheer
And glass of generous wine,
To old friends tried and dear,
If one should come to dine ;
For the best gift of life,
A true and tender wife,
To be ever by his side,
To soften every care,
And all his hopes to share,
His troubles to divide ;
For time to read the pages
Of ancient bards and sages ;
For Nature's lovely looks,
And for the wondrous books
Found in the running brooks,
And sermons that, from stones,
Are preached in solemn tones,

And the tongues that, in trees,
Speak out with every breeze ;
And to see the good that springs
From all created things,
As the mighty minstrel sings.

All this the trusty soil
Will give to honest toil ;
And what can wise desire,
In this world, more require ?
Love, with its fireside charm,
The heart to touch and warm ;
Books and learned leisure,
And the lofty pleasure,
That Nature's beauties give
To him who can receive ;
Who worships at her shrine,
And sees the light divine

Shed from morn till even,
From the varying heaven ;
The mystic charm that broods
Over the solitudes
Of the majestic woods,
O'er waving corn and grass,
And clouds that change and pass,
O'er perfumed wild-wood flowers,
And rustling summer bowers,
And speaks, from forest, field, and grove,
Thoughts of goodness, power, and love.

Grant me, ye Fates! that, living so,
I calmly through this world may go ;
With sweet affection ever near,
My quiet home to bless and cheer ;
My good farm to supply my want,
Where I may read, and muse, and plant ;

Muse and dream the hours away,
Careless and free, but not delay
To plant aright, while yet 'tis day,
Such seeds of knowledge, truth, and love,
As may produce me fruit above ;
Thoughts of the gifted and the wise,
For a ripe harvest in the skies.

The farmer thus spoke, as he sat by the fire,
And puffed the light smoke of a Cuba cigar ;
And his simple desire, though humble, was higher
Than the passions of towns, their discord, and jar.
His joys were of earth, but his hope, like a star,
Shone on him from heaven with pure, steady ray ;
For he knew that the grace he delighted to trace,
With love never weary, on Nature's sweet face,
Was only the dawn, whilst above was the day.

NATURE AND ART.

“Nature is made better by no mean,
 But nature makes that mean : so o’er that art,
 Which, you say, adds to nature, is an art
 That nature makes.”

WINTER’S TALE.

In solitudes
 Of fields and woods,
 Where nature’s looks
 Deep meaning teach,
 Beyond the reach
 Of wisest books ;
 Where she outpours
 Her secret stores,

To those who seek,
In spirit meek,
And at her feet
Will humbly sit ;
From gleaming river,
 And arching sky,
And clouds that ever
 Change as they fly ;
From leafy bowers,
 And waving trees,
And perfumed flowers—
 The banquet of bees ;
From Spring's soft blush
 On the budding grove ;
The ardent flush
 Of Summer's love ;
From rosy dyes
Of twilight skies ;

From sunset's glow
On Winter's snow,
And moonlight gleams
On quiet streams ;
From twinkling leaves
Of forest trees,
Where every breeze
A network weaves
Of quivering light,
Of dark and bright ;
From turfy glades,
And cool arcades
Of the ancient wood,
Where the trees have stood
Since the olden time,
And seen the prime,
The little span,
Of the phantom, man,

Oft come and go—
A fleeting show;
From waving fields
 Of grass and grain,
When harvest gilds
 The teeming plain,
And from the splendor,
Whose glories render
Glad Autumn's days,
A burst and blaze,
 Of color bright
 And golden light,
Sobered by haze;
Come the thoughts that shine
In the poet's line,
 The fancies that fill
The artist's mind;
 As the sparkling rill

On the side of a mountain,
Is fed from a fountain

Vast and still,
Central and deep,
In its rocky keep,
Remote and cool,
Ever flowing and ever full.

Beauty of earth,
And soft clear skies,
In them has birth,
And in them lies.
They must see it
With mind, not eyes ;
Their souls' be it,
Or else it dies.
Only for those

Who rightly know it,
Artist and poet,
Its pure stream flows.
They feel it part
Of their own heart ;
And Nature's whole,
Her grace and terror,
Shows, like a mirror,
To them the soul.
'Tis theirs to seize
Her images
And airy forms ;
With substance mix
Their shadowy charms ;
Their beauties fix,
In shape and hue
Lovely and true ;

Symbols of thought,
Their meaning caught,
By brush or pen,
Is told to men.

And this is art,
Whose various charm,
Can touch the heart,
The fancy warm;
Whose power shows
The grace that clings
To common things,
And doth disclose
The secret springs
Of joy and love,
Giving us wings
To soar above

Life's selfish cares,
Troubles and fears ;
 That can reveal
Things to our view
Wondrous and new,
Which the vulgar eye
Passes heedless by,
Which the worldling's mind,
Darkened and blind,
Can never find,
 And make us feel
The noble treasure
Of daily pleasure,
That everywhere,
Like the circling air,
 And universal light,
In Nature's flowing cup,
Is offered up
 For our delight.

A WELCOME.

“What have I left, that I should stay and groan?

The most of me to heaven is fled:

My thoughts and joys are all packed up and gone,

And for their old acquaintance plead.”

GEORGE HERBERT.

YEARS have passed since we two parted
And I left thee, broken-hearted,
To tread alone the paths of life
Uncheered amid the world's hard strife.
United, time serenely flew,
And deep the calm delights we knew,
When life, with hope and love, shone o'er us
And a bright future smiled before us.

Through long and solitary years
I 've seen thee overwrought by cares,
Lightly borne when we together
Smiled through fair or stormy weather,
Hard to bear, in grief, alone,
When sympathy and love have gone,
And the heart falters in disgust,
And duty serves, because it must.

Though taken away, I still was by thee,
For my fond spirit hovered nigh thee.
I saw full well, O faithful heart !
How sad it was for thee to part ;
Have watched thee, wrapped in deepest gloom,
Pace round our old, familiar room,
A glove, a shoe, a ribbon kiss,
Poor tokens of remembered bliss.

And often by thy widowed bed
Beheld the tears in darkness shed,
When thou didst call in frenzy vain,
On her, who answered not again.
Oft, too, beside the grassy mound,
That holds my dust, in narrow bound,
I've been with thee in thy despair,
And seen thee kneel and heard thy prayer.

Time hath not hushed thy secret sigh
Nor lustre brought to thy dimmed eye,
New pleasures softened thy distress
Or cheered thy heart's lone wretchedness.
The hour hath come that sets thee free,
The world will soon be naught to thee,
And its vain troubles will but seem
Like the remembrance of a dream.

In this abode of light and peace,
Earth's labor, care and sorrow cease,
And here the weary find repose
From toil, the wretched from their woes.
The soul, by matter unconfined,
Leaves its worn instrument behind,
And as to heaven it upward springs,
Truth, love and virtue only brings.

At length I see thee on the couch
Of pain ; disease with friendly touch
Hath brought the long desired relief
From earth's imprisonment and grief.
Over thy bed death hovers now ;
Soon he 'll strike the wished for blow.
'Tis done, the easy struggle 's past,
And now, oh joy ! thou 'rt here at last.

TO A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

“Lady, you are the cruelest she alive,
If you will lead these graces to the grave,
And leave the world no copy.”

TWELFTH NIGHT.

THE painter's or the sculptor's art,
To dullest matter can impart
Ideal charms and graces, wrought
From the treasures of his thought,
And in the dull cold marble show
The visions of his dreaming mind,
Or bid the senseless canvas glow
With beauty, viewless as the wind

Or spheres of light beyond the sky,
To all except the artist's eye,
Till fashioned by his skilful hand,
Its lovely forms before us stand.
Then endowed with shape and features,
His thoughts appear like living creatures,
Fill us with joy and sweet surprise,
And gaze at us with earnest eyes,

Greet us, with winning smiles that reach
The heart, with soft and gentle looks,
From brows serene and pure, that teach
Wisdom, persuasively as books.

Thus may we, even now, behold
The glowing dreams of love and bliss,
That moved the spirits of the old
Masters of Italy and Greece ;

Of Phidias and of Raphael, they

Long since are mingled with the dust,
But their fine thought was not of clay,
And beauty lives, though men decay,

Exempt from time's corroding rust.
And generations as they passed,

Have gazed upon those wondrous forms ;
Though empires fall around, they last
And keep the lustre of their charms.

And long as woman's beauty warms
And love, the heart, with passion fires,
Or grace high sentiment inspires,
These witching works will still control
With all their ancient sway, the soul.

For genius can combine in one,

The several charms that scattered, lurk
In thousand forms, and thus outrun
In faultless models, nature's work.

Seldom to mortal eyes 'tis given,
A living Venus to behold
Or features cast in human mould,
With the Madonna's look of heaven.
And vain would be the hope, to find
All beauty in one form combined,
With no defect of shape or face
To quarrel with its noblest grace.

Therefore, fair lady, when I saw
Thee first, whose charms all gazes draw,
'Twas an experience bright and new,
So bright that joy to wonder grew.
The classic lip, the placid brow,
The soft dark eyes that glance below,

The moulding of the rounded cheek,
White as the lily's opaque flower,
And smiles, that have a mystic power,
Meaning beyond all words to speak ;
The faultless symmetry, that tells
What bewildering beauty dwells
Beneath the flowing robes, that drape
And yet reveal that perfect shape ;
And graceful motion, like a deer's,
Or willow boughs in breezes swaying,
In every attitude betraying
Womanly gentleness and fears ;
And with it, a most winning manner,
Sweet, timid, dignified and soft,
Graces these charms, as borne aloft,
Graces a queenly ship, her banner.

Here, then, I thought, is such a form
As a true artist's hand might trace,
And here a rich and beaming face,
That would a painter's visions warm.

But like a rare and costly flower
That buds and blossoms to decay,
These clustering beauties live their hour,
And then they, too, must pass away.

Oh for some hand, whose cunning touch,
The obedient marble could impress
Or kindling canvas, to express
This living, breathing loveliness

And keep it for the future, such
As now it shines, that it might still,
All gazers' hearts with rapture fill
And be a joy forever—not
Like things unvalued, 'be forgot.

L. of C.

JENNY LIND.

“Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
That with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.”

MILTON.

CATCH the murmurs of the breeze
Rustling through the summer trees,
And the purling of the rill
As it wanders down the hill.
When the birds their gladness sing
In the soft and genial spring,
Listen to their notes of love
Floating through the perfumed grove.

Liquid notes of warbling bird
When by spring's soft influence stirred,
Sweet tones of the mountain brook
Wandering from its rocky nook,
And the low murmurs of the wind,
Are in the voice of Jenny Lind.

THE VOICE OF WINTER.

“A lusty winter,
Frosty but kindly.”

AS YOU LIKE IT.

THE forest's gorgeous robe of varied hue

November's winds had stripped; the golden days
Of autumn too had gone, its sky's soft blue

And landscapes mellowed by a dreamy haze :
When from the north I came; like troops around me,
Wild tempests raged, a snowy mantle bound me,
And nature shuddered through her wide dominions
And trembling heard the rushing of my pinions.

With summer grass the meadows yet were green,
My withering breath hath left them bare and gray;
Sparkling in motion were the rivers seen,
My icy touch hath stopped them on their way.
The birds at my approach have hushed their singing,
And now their flight to other climes are winging,
And cold winds sweep o'er frozen fields and bowers
Which late with harvests waved and smiled with
flowers.

But nature's friend I come and not her foe,
Her beauty to preserve, not to destroy,
And soon again those fields and bowers shall know,
Spring's buds and bloom and summer's ripened joy.
The bare trees are not dead but only sleeping,
Beneath the ice the crystal streams are creeping,
And tender, living germs, a countless number
In field and grove and naked forest slumber.

The little birds have only flown away

 Their merry notes, 'neath warmer skies to sing ;

To their old haunts, they know to find their way,

 And will return with the returning spring.

Like winged flowers their painted plumage showing

Amid the groves, with leaves and blossoms glowing,

Again in tuneful rivalry contending,

And their sweet songs, with gentle breezes blending.

Nor doth my power fair nature's face deform

 To her true lovers ; as the seasons roll,

Her aspect changes, but its grace and charm,

 And varying beauty, still illumine the whole.

Lovely the snow, as summer's perfumed daughters,

And crystal ice is bright as running waters ;

Brilliant as June's, my sky, though not so tender,

And even my darkest storms are clothed with splendor.

The snow-clad fields, the gray and purple wood,
The lights and shades in its recesses deep,
The music of the winds, as wild and rude,
They down its long and echoing vistas sweep,
And the rich beauty of the bare limbs, throwing
Their tracery 'gainst a sky with sunset glowing ;
Such are the charms that banish winter's terrors
And cast a witching veil o'er all its horrors.

And if my keen and icy blasts, with dread
Of want and wretchedness, some hearts may fill,
'Tis part of that mysterious plan, wide-spread
Through nature's rule, which mingles good and ill.
For unto others, I bring ease and pleasure,
Nights of gay revelry and days of leisure,
Comfort and cheerfulness and hearty greetings
Of friends and neighbors, in their merry meetings.

When the bright, pure, exhilarating snow,
Wraps in its dazzling mantle, plain and hill,
The country folk, on joyous errands, go
From house to house, and eat and drink their fill.
On every road the merry sleigh-bells ringing,
Herald the happy groups, who laughing, singing,
From labor free, healthful, light-hearted, careless,
Heed not my storms, nor think my season cheerless.

'Tis cold, but now the duties of the year
That summoned them a-field, are past and done;
Seedtime and harvest, autumn's thrifty care,
Went on, protected by a warmer sun.
Light toil it is for them, so strong and able,
To fodder stock, well-housed in shed and stable,
To thresh, with sounding flail, the wheat sheaves yellow,
Though round the barn, my tempests rage and bellow.

In many a homestead, by the blazing fire,
 United families together sit,
Content in homely plenty, nor aspire
 Beyond the joys to their condition fit.
Talk of the crops, the cattle and the prices,
Discuss from Washington the last advices,
Tell village gossip, nor perhaps are missing,
Some rustic love-making and harmless kissing.

Free, independent, hardy, honest, plain
 In life and manners, neither worn by care,
Nor made corrupt by sordid love of gain,
 Nor tempted into vice by pleasure's snare,
Nor fettered by the luxury which encumbers,
Their days flow calmly on, rest to their slumbers
And sturdy health, their easy labor brings them,
And nature, with boon hand, her treasures flings them.

I visit too great cities, where the crowd
 Bustling and full of movement, noise and life,
Pours its dense throngs, impetuous and loud
 In earnest industry and restless strife.
Where shameless vice its post forever keeping,
Mocks squalid misery uncared for weeping,
And haggard passion raves and drunken riot,
And lawless mobs disturb the public quiet.

There, I bring with me terror, to the huts
 Where ragged poverty unnoticed dwells,
And many a wretch, half-frozen, vainly shuts
 The broken window, when the north blast swells ;
And the sunk eye of many a mother glistens
With tears, as to the whistling wind she listens,
And sees upon the hearth the small fire dying,
And hears her cold and hungry children crying.

But these are not all, the prosperous and gay,
In whose well-furnished homes warm comfort dwells,
Where want intrudes not, art and wealth display
The luxury refined by taste, which tells
Of quiet lives and cultivated senses
And habits formed, regardless of expenses,
Of leisure and repose on good security
And full reliance on this world's futurity.

Give me a joyful welcome, for with me
Come the dear pleasures that to home belong,
Fireside delights and sweet society
Of loved companions, through the evening long.
'Mid such, by ease and elegance surrounded,
Kind words are spoken and the harp is sounded,
And though without, the icy tempest lowers,
Within, enjoyment charms the flying hours.

Mine is the festive season ; round the board,
Covered and decked with luxury profuse,
Choice guests assemble, whilst from cellars stored
With ancient treasures of the jovial juice,
The hoarded bottles come ; the old wine flowing,
The rich old wine, with golden radiance glowing,
Gives words to wit, to wit gives ready laughter,
And sometimes leaves a heart or headache after.

And oft at night to join the sprightly dance
Queen Fashion's lieges in gay crowds repair.
A thousand lights from polished mirrors glance,
And beauty, in their lustre, looks more fair.
Amid the groups, arrayed in glittering dresses,
Bewildering forms are seen and waving tresses,
Soft eyes that wound the heart, and lovely faces,
With some that were not modelled from the Graces.

In light and joyful strains the music swells,
And gracefully responsive to its note,
In squared cotillions, move the beaux and belles,
Or in the waltz's tempting circles float.
Eyes speak to eyes, in gentle looks revealing,
The lover's hope, the maiden's tender feeling ;
Here dangerous beauty puts forth all her power,
And reigns, sweet mistress of the brilliant hour.

And oft, to breathe the pure and frosty air,
The active youth now mounts the bounding steed,
Who, in his strength exulting, scarce will bear
The tightened curb to check his fiery speed.
And as they dash along, with vigor glowing,
O'er the smooth ice and crisp snow lightly going,
The rider and the horse enjoy together,
The exciting exercise and wholesome weather.

Now too, away from crowds and empty noise,
Alone, through silent hours, the student sits,
Feeding his mind, or in the witching joys
Of the muse wrapt, as changeful humor fits.
The inspired poet's page or ancient story
Kindles his spirit with the love of glory;
Truth to his eyes her awful form discloses,
And genius on his soul, its spell imposes.

For him time flies with swift and noiseless wing;
Enchanted and absorbed, he marks it not;
Careless of pleasures to which others cling,
Though uncheered solitude may be his lot.
The world's vain fetters from his spirit shaking,
His own thoughts his most loved companions making,
Scarce mingling in affairs or interests real,
He lives with beings and 'mid scenes ideal.

Such are the joys I bring, nor are they least

Of those that wait upon the varying year.

My reign is short, and nature, soon released,

Robed in spring's leaves and garlands will appear.

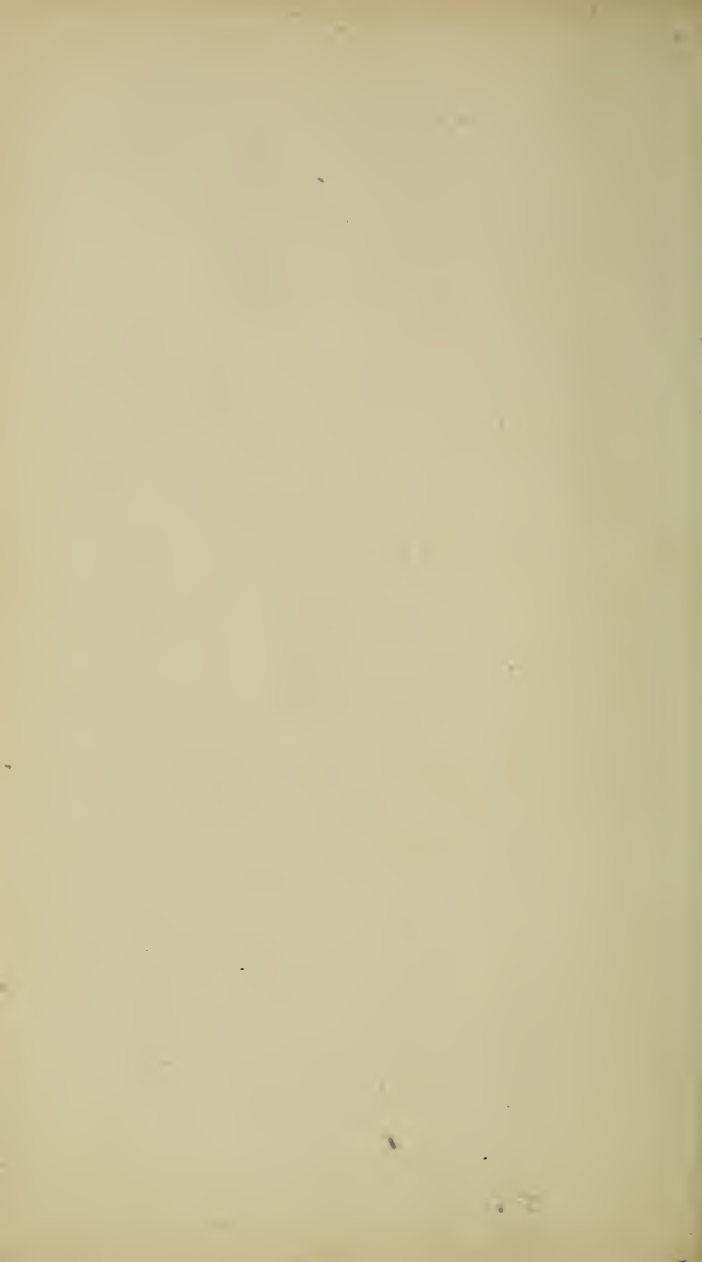
A feeling heart and cultivated reason,

Pleasure and beauty find in every season,

For unto each, by all-providing Heaven,

Its own peculiar charm and joy are given.





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